

IN HONOR OF MATTIE RHODES
CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF
SERVICE IN 2004

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 31, 2004

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an agency that has supported Kansas City area children, families and communities for 110 years. The Mattie Rhodes Center provides social services, mental health counseling and provides emerging artists a venue for their work.

The center is named for Mattie Rhodes, a young woman who worked for the less fortunate with a group of Sunday school friends call the Little Gleaners. In 1890, at the age of 19 she died of typhoid fever. Mattie left \$500 to be used for the benefit of children. The Little Gleaners honored her wish and founded the Mattie Rhodes Memorial Society in 1894 with this pledge: "I promise to do all I can to help the needy and suffering by working for them, learning about them, giving for them, and trying to interest others in them."

That pledge made 110 years ago remains a reality today. The mission of the Mattie Rhodes Center is to "strengthen children, families and community by providing social services, mental health counseling and art experiences in a bilingual, culturally sensitive environment." Mattie Rhodes offers services such as individual and family counseling, Hispanic mental health programs, job readiness and placement and educational experiences for children. More than 650 individuals and families access family services each year through the Mattie Rhodes Center. The majority are of Mexican descent and are recent immigrants who speak little or no English. Each year more than 1,700 children benefit from mentoring programs, youth support groups and arts education geared to youth from the suburbs and Kansas City's urban core. The Mattie Rhodes Art Center continues to be a place where children can have fun, learn about, appreciate and create art. In 1999, the Mattie Rhodes Center reached out to Hispanic artists and art patrons by establishing the Mattie Rhodes Art Gallery. It provides a unique experience for Latino artists to display their work, and for the community to view and appreciate. The exhibits educate children and the public about the importance of Latino arts in the West Side community and the greater metropolitan area.

Area daycare centers, elementary and high schools, community organizations and individuals constitute the broad based sector reached by Mattie Rhodes Center programs. These groups include Garcia School, McCoy School, Northeast High School, Rose Brooks Domestic Violence Shelter, Hand-In-Hand and the Missouri Division of Family Services, Hispanic artists and patrons.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the Mattie Rhodes Center in Kansas City, Missouri for its 110 years of outstanding service. I congratulate this excellent organization in conjunction with The Mattie Rhodes Art of the Mask Auction on April 3, 2004. The auction has grown from a children's art center project into a community celebration. This year's auction will be the twelfth in Mattie Rhodes Center's history. I am proud to have contributed by creating a clay mask for the event.

Ms. Mattie Rhodes would have been proud of these accomplishments. Eleven decades after her wish, the Mattie Rhodes Center continues to care for those less fortunate by providing programs that help children and families become more self reliant, confident, creative and productive members of their communities. From the humble beginnings of a committed young girl's dying wish to her name sake agency that now serves thousands of Kansas Citians, the Mattie Rhodes Center is keeping her promise alive and making a dramatic difference in the lives of the less fortunate.

REIMBURSING MEMBERS OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES FOR CERTAIN TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES

SPEECH OF

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Senate bill 2057, a bill to reimburse members of the Armed Forces for certain travel expenses incurred while on leave before the Central Command Rest and Recuperation Leave Program was expanded to include domestic travel.

This bill, which recently passed the Senate, directs the Secretary of Defense to reimburse members of the Armed Forces for transportation expenses for up to one domestic round trip that was taken between September 25 and December 18, 2003.

Mr. Speaker, the past few years have been a difficult and strenuous time for the brave and dedicated men and women of our Armed Forces. Our soldiers are tasked in missions across the globe, from Iraq and Afghanistan to South Korea and the Philippines. Many of these missions involve combat or other extreme hardships.

In addition to being kept apart for months at a time, military families have to cope with rising health care costs and uncertainties about the future. Deployment orders for reservists and the National Guard are increasing, and stop-loss measures have been put in place for enlisted personnel who thought they were on the verge of going home. Tens of thousands of military families lack adequate housing and affordable medical care, and Democratic efforts to increase family separation and danger pay have been defeated by Republicans in this body.

Each deployment period, soldiers only receive a brief period of leave to reunite with their families and enjoy respite from the hazards of serving abroad. That soldiers, in some instances, should have had to pay for their own transportation costs while on leave is most unfortunate.

Mr. Speaker, it is reasonable for Congress to demonstrate its gratitude to the men and women of the Armed Forces by ensuring that they do not have to pay out of pocket for travel expenses incurred while transitioning from the difficulties of deployment to the welcoming arms of their families at home.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

BACK OUR VETERANS HEALTH

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 31, 2004

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, since the creation of the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) health system, the Nation's doctors of chiropractic (DCs) have been kept outside the system and all but prevented from providing proven, cost-effective and much-needed care to veterans, including those among the most vulnerable and in need of the range of health care services DCs are licensed to provide. In 2002, 4.5 million patients received care in DVA health facilities, including 75 percent of all disabled and low-income veterans. Although the DVA health care budget is roughly \$26 billion, in 2002, less than \$370,000 went toward chiropractic services for veterans.

I am proud to introduce legislation—H.R. 4051, the Better Access to Chiropractors to Keep Our Veterans Healthy Act (BACK Our Veterans Health Act)—that is designed to provide veterans with direct access to a doctor of chiropractic, if that is their choice, through the veterans health care system. In developing this bill, I have worked closely with chiropractic patients, particularly our veterans, who know the benefits of chiropractic care and bear witness to the positive outcomes and preventative health benefits of chiropractic care. I was also pleased to work with the American Chiropractic Association (ACA), the Nation's largest chiropractic organization and the national voice of doctors of chiropractic and their patients. I am told by the ACA that there are more than 60,000 doctors of chiropractic and in excess of 25 million chiropractic patients across America.

Specifically, my bill seeks to amend title 38 of the United States Code to permit eligible veterans to have direct access to chiropractic care at Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals and clinics. Section 3 of the measure states that "The Secretary [of Veterans Affairs] shall permit eligible veterans to receive needed [health care] services, rehabilitative services, and preventative health services from a licensed doctor of chiropractic on a direct access basis at the election of the eligible veteran, if such services are within the State scope of practice of such doctor of chiropractic." The measure goes on to directly prohibit discrimination among licensed health care providers by the DVA when determining which services a patient needs.

Over the years, Mr. Speaker, representatives of the Department of Veterans Affairs have come before the House Veterans Affairs Committee, a panel on which I serve, and have insisted that chiropractic benefits are available to veterans and that no bias exists within the DVA against the chiropractic profession. But the facts I cited above speak otherwise. For all practical purposes, access to chiropractic care has been nonexistent within the DVA system. Chiropractic care has so seldom been offered to veterans that it can be fairly said to be a phantom benefit—and for years, Mr. Speaker, the DVA has done nothing to correct this deficiency. There is simply no evidence that the DVA has ever acted proactively in any meaningful and substantive way to ensure that chiropractic care is made available to veterans—and because of that